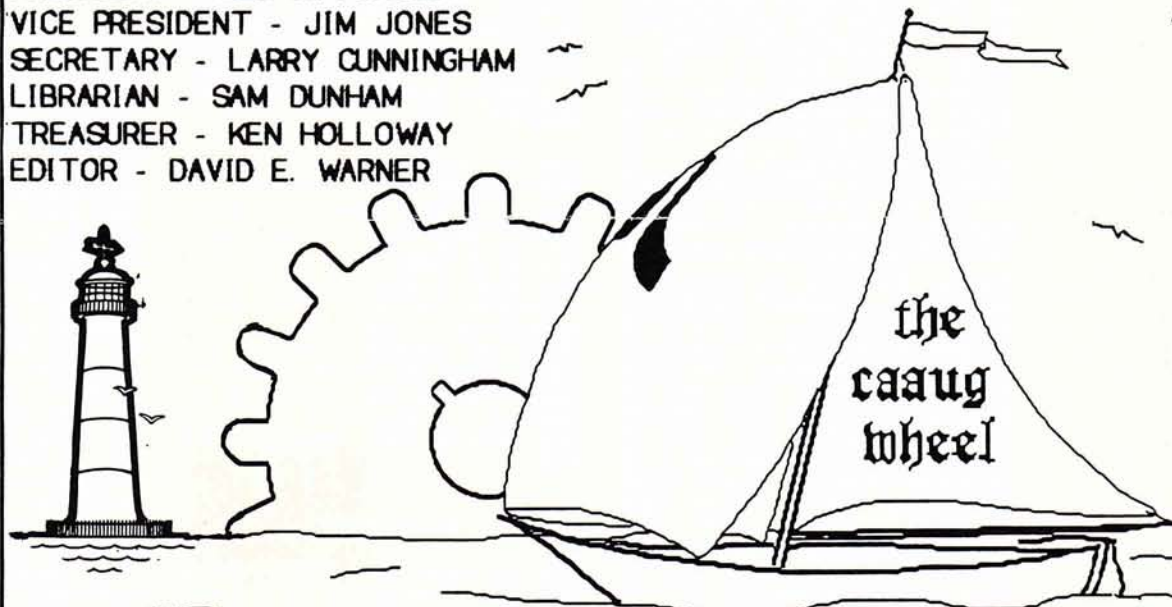PUBLISHED MONTHLY BY THE

COASTAL AREA ATARI USERS' GROUP

an independent computer users' group

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wheel

IN THIS ISSUE

PRESIDENT'S CORNER

by Lee Hutcheson

AND THE WINNA IS ...

Congratulations to Jean Bourvic of Ocean Springs for being the first to correctly identify the acronyms in last months contest. For those of you who might not know all of them, lets just review. MTBF: Mean Time Between Failures (Jean correctly added that some writers use it to mean Mean Time Before Failure)--this is an indication of how long a component might be expected to last before it breaks or wears out. MTTR: Mean Time To Repair--this is an indication of how long your equipment will be out of commission when it does need repair. EIA: the Electronic Industries Association has made some contributions toward bringing about standardization in connections and interfaces among the various manufacturers. LOGO: A limited programming language

With heavy graphics component, intended primarily for children. Commonly referred to as the Language Of Turtle Graphics. (My five year old doesn't know she is programming; she just thinks she is telling the turtle where to go to make pretty designs. And in Atari LOGO its a real turtle--up to four of them in fact). ANSI: The American National Standards Institute has made significant progress in promoting standardization in the electronics industry. GIGO: Garbage In, Garbage Out is a concept known and frequently proven by all programmers. Given any bad input data, a program will inevitably produce bad results. WYSIWYG: What You See Is What You Get does not refer to the bikini clad cuties on the Biloxi beach.

Rather, it refers to the capability of a program (and in some cases hardware) to show on the monitor exactly what you will get when you print the product. CAAUG: Now, could anyone miss this one? Oh, you did! Its the Coastal Area Atari Users' Group of course. ZULU: No, I am not referring to a part of the Bantu nation! In communications it is the code word for the letter 'Z' and is substituted (particularly in the military) for Greenwich Meridian Time (G M T). It is the international point of reference for the time of day. IC: An Integrated Circuit, often called a "chip," refers to a large number of related electrical conductors, transistors, and other components being densely and microscopically placed on a semiconductor (chip). This concept is now being pushed to unbelievable limits. It seems they are trying to see how many computers can be built on the head of a pin.

Again, congratulations to Jean Bourvic for coming up with all the right answers. Jean, you can claim your prize at the July meeting. Now when I get callers with strange or off the wall questions, I know who to sic them on. Readers, would you like more of this type of quiz? Should the questions be harder or easier? I would appreciate your feedback on this.

8-BIT TIPS

Did you ever wish there was a way to determine how much memory was left or if all of the memory was working? To determine the free RAM in an 8-bit Atari while in basic, just type "PRINT FRE (0) <RETURN>". In both my 800 and my daughter's 800XL I get 37902 bytes free with no program loaded and no DOS. With the drives on and regular Atari DOS 2.5 loaded, they both show 32290 bytes

free. Remember, the DOS uses memory when loaded and sor require more memory tha others. Moreover, if you reconfigure your DOS to handle additional peripherals you will find even more memory consumed. For instance, my working copy of DOS 2.5 which has been modified for four drives leaves only 32002 bytes when it is in memory. The old Atari DOS 1.0, which resides totally in memory (no disk access when calling up DOS from basic), leaves only 28814 bytes. I am sure that is enough on that subject, but I will offer more in the future. I would appreciate your help with any useful peeks or pokes, or other tips you may have learned which I can pass on to the members.

CALL-WAITING WOES

Isn't modern technology great? With call-waiting service you can always get that emergency call. What actually happens is; you are on long (read that expensive) distance in the middle of downloading a long file when the call-waiting sign notifies you of another ca. The signal is just enough interruption to lose some data and guarantee that your program won't work; or enough to make your modem drop the carrier detect. To make matters worse, the call is for one of your kids from a pal they saw not five minutes ago. I called the telephone company and there is a solution--for some of you. Some of the exchanges along the Gulf Coast have provisions for turning off call-waiting while others do not. Mine does (388); sorry about that if yours doesn't. To determine if you can turn off call-waiting in your exchange you could call the phone company, but I think they would much prefer that you just tried it yourself. First, you must use a touch tone phone. When you hear the dial tone, dial "*70" (star, seven, zero). You should then

hear a series of short tones followed by another dial tone. You can now dial your number with call-waiting turned off for the duration of the call. Modem terminal programs with autodial can be programed to do this for you. The feature is only turned off during that one call and cannot be turned off during a call or for any incoming calls. If you don't have call- waiting service, don't bother dialing this code. You will just get the old recording of "If you would like to make a call...". Good luck!

COMPUTER USERS' DAY '87

The computer show at Edgewater Mall was a great success. I was pleased to see the cooperation between the different users groups and the interest of the mall patrons. I think the greatest thing, however, was the fun the participants had. Oh, they were beat by the time it was over, but they all had a great time. Thanks to everyone who worked so hard to get ready for the show and who worked during those two days. There was a great deal of interest in the music capability of the ST machines which served to make me aware of the need for more attention to that area in the future. Also, I had a surprising number of questions about CAD/CAM programs--Another area to get smart on. Coast Computers had a set of the new liquid crystal 3-D glasses there. Unfortunately, several programs we wanted to show did not arrive in time. Midi Maze from Hybrid Arts is still weeks away from release and we couldn't talk them into a demo copy. PC-Ditto, which allows the ST to emulate an IBM PC/XT, came in a few days late. I have seen it and it appears to be a good program. There are still some speed and graphics shortcomings, but it works. I will withhold final judgement until I see some more of it.

I am sure we can coax Jeff Wimmer into showing it at the July meeting.

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|    ERRATIC EDITORIALS        |
|                             |
|            BY               |
|                             |
|      DAVID E. WARNER         |
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Well, the Computer Users' Day '87 show is over. And I feel like it was a big success. When you consider that this was the first time any of the area users groups had ever done anything together, it came off with virtually no problems. The biggest thing we faced was a couple of electrical outlets that didn't work, and one group that could not make it on Friday night, but showed up on Saturday.

I think most people would like to see another show, although an expanded version...more computers and a larger display by each group. I agree with that and have started checking into available dates. But several people should be thanked who helped make the show a success. First, Bakers Shoes, Gene Warrs Mens Clothes, and Neils Footgear all supplied electricity to make up for the shortage of plugs in that area of the mall. If you get the chance, show your appreciation by shopping in those stores to help pay for their assistance. I know Pamela did...she bought a pair of shoes in Bakers on Saturday, and then picked out a first anniversary ring in Gordons (which was right across from our booth). How convenient! That show ended up costing me a mint! Anyway, the individuals who manned our booth deserve a real big round of applause. Several stayed both days of the show, for the entire time! Tom

Reesce, Lowen Overby, Lee Hutcheson, Jeff Wimmer, Dave Flemming, Ron Wright, Carol Egerton, Larry Loe, Sam Dunham, Larry Cunningham and JJ Kropp all spent time in the booth. (Hope I didn't miss anyone!) Jeff and Dave set up their ST systems with hard drives, Tom had his synthesizer hooked up to one of them. Coast Computers supplied lots of things, including Stereo 3-D glasses. Lee had tons of stuff that he supplied, including the speakers and amp for Tom's music. And of course, we all looked so fine in our special T-shirts, provided by Ron Lindsey from the Apple Group. Doyle Brandt, from National Computers video taped the event and is making a copy for the group. For those of you who did not get to go, you will be able to see all of us in our glory on tape! Thanks again all!

LEE PAPPAS FROM ANALOG DOES READ THE FOCUS!

Well, it looks like Lee read my editorial about the Dallas Show, and was moved enough to write a letter to me asking for a rematch against my son in MIDI-MAZE! When (and if) we have an AtariFest, I will be glad to officiate! He is waiting with baited breath to visit the Gold Coast once again...his childhood memories of the place still fresh in his mind!

COMPUTALK TCS MAKING BIG PUSH

COMPUTALK TCS sent us a package asking people to call their BBS. The introductory packet is to help you understand all that is available as well as how to use COMPUTALK TCS once you are online

COMPUTALK TCS has been in business for 5 years, giving the best in online adventures as well as great downloads. Services Available: Compu-Gab (CB simulation, up to 6 users) Compu-Vote/Surveys (Public Opinion Polls) 8

Multi-user Adventures 8 Multi-user Message Bases 9 Specialty Sections Compu-Novel (Write your own story) Conference Area (forums) Longest BBS Listing in the nation Great deals from area stores (Texas) 24 hour service/7 days a week 6 Metro lines 300/1200 baud service.

How to log-on to COMPUTALK TCS:

-Set your computer at full duplex -Set baud rate at either 300 or 1200 -Call (817) 589-2588 (Use "214" when using PC Pursuit) -Computer will answer and respond with: "Welcome to COMPUTALK TCS, hit (RETURN)". If you would like more information, there will be a package at the meeting.

COASTAL AREA BBS

Well, I have cut the hours of the BBS again, due to a lack of callers. They are now 24 hours on weekends and 6 p.m. until 6 a.m. Monday through Thursday. There should be more traffic than there is, but for some reason, it is just not there. I have added MS-DOS areas, Apple areas, new message bases, new functions, on-line games and polls, a most popular text file that lists all of the most downloaded and uploaded files and several other things.

I think one of the reasons for the decreased usage is the popularity of services like Genie, Delphi, PC Pursuit, etc. They have cut down the interest in local boards. However, if you read the article about the proposed FCC changes, you may find things getting real expensive for those services. Even though it is counter productive for the success of my board, I urge you to write a letter to the FCC stating that you are against any increase in rates.

NEW GREETING CARDS

Classic Compu, the innovative young supplier of personal computer products and accessory items, is introducing two new thematic greeting card collections, "Seasons Greetings" and "Merry Christmas." These expand the series of "Celebrate," "Party Time," "An Invitation," "Thank You," "A Short Note," "We've Moved," and "Open House."

According to Jay Forman, founder and president of Classic Compu, "We are now offering both the home computer and business user a complete line of continuous tractor-feed greeting cards in fan- fold form that are designed for any word processor or personal computer and printer. (Regular price $11.95 - ST computers)

For further information contact Classic Compu, 3100 W. Chapel Ave, Cherry Hill, NJ 08002. Telephone (609) 667-5310.

ST X-PRESS

For those of you interested in another ST only magazine, there is ST X-PRESS. They have monthly columns on: Assembly language, Forth programming, GFA Basic, C language, Pascal programming, MIDI column by Stefan Daystrom (at Hybrid Arts), A column for users interested in desktop publishing, and a monthly dose of computerish humor. They also keep an accurate public domain ST BBS list, an immense (and economic) public domain library, and extremely affordable Classified Ads section, The Grapevine--a new products and gossip section, an Atari ST User Group List, and many other items.

For more information write ST X-PRESS, P.O. Box 2383 La Habra, CA 90632. Telephone (213) 691-8000. Magazine $3.95 retail, subscriptions $35. Magazine with Disk $8.50 retail, $75. ($65 if 5 or

more members order at the same time)

THE STilt

The STilt is a stand fabricated from durable flame retardant plastic that is light weight yet strong. The unique construction firmly secures two micro floppy disk drives without obstructing ventilation. The disk drives become instantly accessible, no more stacking them up on books! The STilt's simple and solid design provides a stable platform for a CRT. $29.95 retail, 2-4 weeks for delivery and $3.00 minimum for shipping and handling.

For more information contact Ronsat Technologies, Inc., 368 Lexington Drive, Buffalo Grove, Il 600789. Telephone (312) 520- 8003.

HYBRID ARTS GIVE RETURN CALL

Hybrid Arts was kind enough to call and comment on a previous editorial of mine about them. I had talked about their showing in Dallas and how poor I had said it was. I was also upset with couple of other things.

Well, they have promised better support to us, along with an attempt to provide some MEANINGFUL demo disks to the group. They would also like to attend our AtariFest...so, we will wait and see what happens. Heck, I am still waiting eagerly for MIDI MAZE. I want to see all those ST's hooked together!
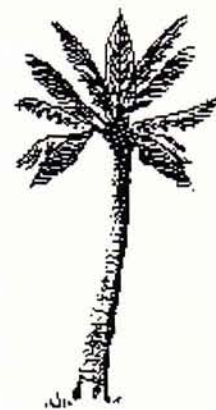
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ST LINE

BY

JEFF WIMMER
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Well, I am writing this review on my ST using

COAST COMPUTERS

2953 Pass Road, Biloxi, MS 39531
(601) 432-2827

System Sale!

520ST Color
1080i Printer
1 Box Paper
1 Mouse Pad

> $1062 Retail

Your cost

$999

for entire

package !!!

Save $144 !

Free

1 TimeWorks program
1 Printer Cable

> $81 Retail

Adjust the $999 price as
indicated for the
following items:

Item	Adjustment
1091i Printer	+ $25
1200HC Modem	+$130
20Meg Hard Drive	+$650
520ST Mono	-$100
1040ST Color	+$175
1040ST Mono	+$100
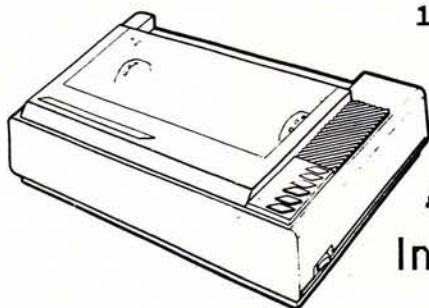
Free Shipping!
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Power Without the Price™

VISA
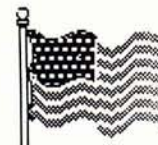
Wordstar V3.31. How are you doing that you ask? I am running Wordstar and PC DITTO! This is the famed IBM emulator (in software) that runs on the ST. It is no speed demon but it seems to run everything with a few exceptions that I will get to in a minute.

Remember back when a company called Paradox released their emulator? It was called MS-EM. People found it wouldn't run anything. After that fiasco, emulators got a bum rap and people were very leery of them. Believe me, this emulator will change their minds.

I talked to Bill Teal (owner of Avant-Garde) last week concerning this product. He had talked to some third party hardware manufacturers at the Comdex show in Atlanta. They were asking questions concerning the marketing of 68020 upgrade boards to be used internally in the present 520/1040ST's. This upgrade would not use the DMA port, since that would slow the upgrade down considerably. The upgrade would run at 16 MHz or about twice as fast as a normal ST.

I bet you want to know what all this has to do with PC DITTO, right! Well, this upgrade would speed up Ditto to run at about 8MHz or the speed of an IBM XT 286 or turbo clone. Talk about respectability for a software emulator! The same people with the big bucks and engineers also want to do a graphics upgrade of 1280x960. That's double the horizontal and more than triple the verticle resolution in the present medium resolution mode of 640x200! You know the sad thing about all of this is that Atari is not aware of what is going on. They didn't know about PC Ditto until a month and a half before Comdex. They also didn't know about Mike Smeltzers' (from New Orleans) Unix for the ST until they saw IT at Comdex and then refused to believe

it until they (Sig Hartman) overheard some AT&T people (developers of Unix) talking about it while they watched it run. They then ran to a phone and called back to HQ and told Leonard Tramiel, "Hey, you won't believe this, but they have Unix running on the ST!" Very sad that Atari is that far behind in what the rest of the industry is doing.

Back to Ditto....Like I said before, some things won't run on the emulator. The only things I personally know of right now are IBM BasicA programs and Jet. Compared to MS-EM, THAT AIN'T SHABBY!

To sum it all up, PC DITTO is a fine product that does what it claims. It's faster than a turtle, slightly slower than my Z-100, and light speed ahead of MS-EM. If you want or need the IBM compatibility, this product should fit the bill. The requirements are a 520 or 1040 (preferred), color monitor (mono support soon), a 3 1/2" drive, a 5 1/4" drive (optional, to run software in that format). The serial port and printer port on the ST are supported as the COM1 port for serial, and LPT1 port for parallel. The shift "*" even works for print screen. All in all, very compatible, usable speed, and a good price for IBM emulation.

Avant-Garde Systems (904) 221-2904 Retail $89.95, available at Coast Computers

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|     CES 2ND REPORT          |
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|   FROM ANTIC MAGAZINE       |
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ANTIC'S CES JUNE '87 WRAP-UP SECOND ANNUAL ATARI ROAST BY NAT FRIEDLAND, ANTIC EDITOR

Towards the end of the

Consumer Electronics Show, we got our first look at so additional important software:

Broderbund is jumping into the ST marketplace with Art Director and Film Director, a DEGAS-quality paint program that will be packaged together with an animation module for $79.95. This software, originally designed by the Hungarians who did ST Battlezone, is expected to ship in August. Features include: rescale, stretch, distort, bend, bulge, spin, perspective, scroll and spin.

Not quite as far along is the ST version of Broderbund's all-time best seller, Print Shop. It is due this fall at $49.95 and will be similar to the sophisticated Macintosh version. Also coming from Broderbund this fall is the ST Karateka at $34.95.

Timeworks Desktop Publisher this fall will join the company's ST word processor, spreadsheet and database software.

Spitfire 1940 is an ST flight combat game coming from Avalon Hill this summer. also picked up an 8-bit review copy of their Guderian wargame.

And back at the bustling Atari booth, we got a look at Bentley Bear Goes To School - a new ST educational series programmed in Israel and featuring the lovable bruin from the Crystal Castle arcade game. Four titles for grades K-6 are to be marketed within 30 days and there will eventually be some 20 in the series. The animation in each title such as Magical Mathematics is of very high quality and the packages will sell for $19.95 apiece.

This year Atari vice president Leonard Tramiel revealed that a 16- bit graphics workstation is in a fairly advanced stage of development. This would be compatible with the ST but

much more powerful. He said that any 32-bit multitasking computer would need to run Unix, but it was a problem deciding which competing version of Unix would be best.

Marketing communications director Neil Harris stated that ST Word Perfect, due in July, runs five times faster than the best selling IBM version.

Harris explained that Atari's top priority at this particular CES was to revitalize the 8-bit line by packaging a redesigned 65XE as a high-end game system, in direct competition with Nintendo and Sega. That's why the Mega ST and the Atari Laser Printer were not displayed this time. According to Harris, the XE Game System was receiving an enthusiastic early response from mass-market purchasing agents.

Here's some additional details about the new Atari 8-bit disk drive and other Atari hardware:

Essentially, the XF551 is an adaptation of the standard disk drive mechanism being used for Atari's IBM clone. The 360K, double-sided, DD 5-1/4 disk drive runs 2.9 times faster than the Atari 1050 and is due in the stores this summer at a $199.95 list-price.

The XF551 can automatically adapt itself to today's S/D and enhanced density DOS disks. However, ADOS, the new OSS coming with the XF551 includes a tree structure allowing subdirectories, easy switching between menus or keyboard commands, and a high degree of file recovery safety.

Bill Wilkinson of OSS says that ADOS will run on any Atari-compatible disk drive, from the old 810 to a 16Mb hard disk. Although 8Mb is the upper limit for efficient operation, a larger hard disk can be partitioned into several logical drives. DOS 2 and 2.5 files can be read into ADOS, but ADOS is not fully compatible with the older operating systems.

Along with the XF551, the Atari products announced in January at the previous CES are now also scheduled for summer release. This impressive list includes the Mega ST in 2 & 4 megabytes, a $1,500 laser printer, the Atari PC clone, the $150 XE Game System version of the 65XE, the 80-column XEP80 display box and the 1200-baud SX212 modem.

By the way, Atari is going back to Chicago in three weeks (should have already happened...ed), where it will show off the ST's MIDI power and become the first personal computer company ever to exhibit at NAMM, the musical instrument industry's show.

FCC PLANNING ON RATE INCREASE FOR TELECOMMUNICATIONS SERVICES...

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According to InfoWorld, the FCC is making a move that could sharply increase telecommunications costs, proposing that enhanced service providers no longer be exempt from paying interstate access charges as of January 1, 1988.

The charges could include a 3-cent-per-minute traffic-sensitive access charge, a 4.3-cent-per-minute terminating access charge, and a 2-cent-per-minute originating charge, depending on factors such as whether the call is local. Affected services include Telenet, Tymnet, Compuserve, and Dow Jones News/Retrieval. (Also expect it to affect Genie, Delphi, and PC Pursuit)

Paolo Guidi, president of Telenet Communications Cor of Reston, Virginia, call the proposal misguided and said it would discriminate against users of computer services.

The FCC is soliciting comments from interested parties. This is something ALL of us need to comment on. Send a letter showing that you are against this action. The address is:

Federal Communications Commission
Secretary's Office
1919 M Street, N.W., Rm 222
Washington, D.C. 20554

Refer to "Interstate Access Charges Exemption for Enhanced Service Providers CC Docket 87-208.

You may get a copy of this by calling (202) 632-7000.

COAST TO COAST ATARI INFORMATION COMPILED BY MARILYN MERICA

Several interesting tidbits this month via other Atari clubs from coast to coast. Let me take this opportunity to thank the other authors and other user's groups for their interesting articles and information, and for trading newsletters with us, thus enabling us to share that information with even more enthusiastic Atari users across the nation. Check this out:
    ABE' ACES - DOS ON A CARTRIDGE - BY EARL M. KURTZ

How many times have you reached for a disk with DOS on it and wished there was a faster way to jump into it. There are many times when I wanted to quickly format a

disk, check a directory, or print a file, just to name a few things that come to mind. I do much more hardware work than software work and on several occasions I have taken time to devise ways to put DOS on an eprom. However, when it came time to actually doing this project, I took the easy way out and said to myself how much trouble is it to put a disk in the drive and load it.

Well I'm glad someone, namely Michael E. Wheeler of Anchorage Alaska, has taken the time to do this worthwhile project. Mr Wheeler has put DOS 2.5, which is public domain, on a cartridge. In addition to DOS 2.5 on cartridge, he has also made modifications to the original 2.5 to include true double density capabilities. Also included on the cartridge is a ram disk handler for the XL and XE computers, which is installed on boot up if you hold down the select button. For the fellow hardware people out there Mr. Wheeler will sell you two 8k eproms with his program on them, which you can install directly in your XL or XE computer. For the real heavy hitters out there, not to mention the frugal; the program to burn the necessary eprom is available for $5.00. Not only does it require an eprom burner, but it also requires that you have a sector editor program, because it does not come on disk with a file name. It is merely consecutive sectors on a disk. Instructions are included with what ever option you decide to purchase.

I explained most of the positive aspects of DOS on cartridge so let me review the negative side. The first problem is that the cartridge occupies 16k of memory when it's inserted; however the ram can be restored if the cartridge is purchased with a switch to select ram and de-select the cartridge. If

you chose to purchase the hardware installation then only a switch and some extra wiring are necessary. The next problem is the basic language, which again is solved with a switch and another eprom mounted in the cartridge. This will limit you to Atari Basic; however you hardware people should be able to deal with this when using the new enhanced basic cartridge. For more information about the above mentioned products, write to: Michael E. Wheeler, PO Box 104013, Anchorage, AK 99510.

S.P.A.C.E. - NEOCHROME TIPS - BY JOHN HILEMAN

At the Allentown Atarifest on March 14, my wife and I talked with Dave Strugas, the main author of Neochrome. Demonstrating his program, he provided examples of a number of tricks that can be done with it. First, seems that Neochrome interferes with keyboard interrupts and will not always respond to the ALT-Help combination to print a screen. The fix is to use a slide show program and when the picture you want to print is on the screen press the ALT-HELP keys. Next he showed us how to use the jackknife feature to manipulate the object oriented graphics produced with Neochrome. With this feature, it is possible to move any on-screen object behind another. To do this, click on the jackknife icon with the left button. In the box opened on the lower right corner of the screen, click on the object shown at the bottom. Move the cursor to the screen to the item you want to move. Click and hold the right button and circle the object. Release the button. The object will now be outlined with a dashed line. Move the cursor inside the dashed line until the cursor arrow is visible. Using the left button, click and hold onto the object and move it where you want. Notice how it will go behind anything else. If you use

the right button instead, the object will become a paintbrush that will paint behind other objects. For a challenge, combine this feature with animation. Although this feature is undocumented, Neochrome allows animation. To access it, click on the grabber. Then go to the right box where the word GRABBER is shown and put the point of the arrow in the top left of the hole in the last R. Press the right button. Notice that a new selection icon that looks like an old time movie camera is now available in the left box. Go to the drawing screen and create a small item to animate. Click on the movie camera and go to your object. Click and HOLD the left button to put a rectangle around it (allow lots of room since this is the area where you will animate). Now move the cursor to the right box and click on ADD. Go back to the object and click and HOLD the right button (Grabber will appear). Use the Grabber to move the object slightly. You can use the X and Y coordinates shown below the left box to keep things in line. Then go back to ADD and repeat as often as you like. Each ADD will result in another animation frame. Finally with the right button click on one of the arrows shown in the right box to begin animation (just like clicking on the Neochrome ramp lines). I haven't figured out how to do everything with animation yet. For example, how can the dashed lines be removed? Maybe someone who does will write a follow-up article to this. I hope you enjoy these tips. The commercial version (Ver. 1.0) has been released for sale at a list price of $29.95.

ATARI....

POWER WITHOUT THE

PRICE....

GENERAL ATARI NEWS

FROM

GEnie ONLINE SERVICE

Category 11,   Topic 17
Message 52   Sun Jun 21,
1987 D.FLORY [AtaribaseBBS]
    at 15:57 EDT

Ok, here we go on the World of Atari impressions. First, if I miss anyone, please forgive me, its late the next day, but I'm still sleepy from spending most of last night playing with the Desckcart and Athena.

The first impression was of the convention center itself. Its Huge, for this area, at least, covering about a 4 block area for the whole complex. This includes the techmart, a large, NICE, hotel, and the convention ctr. itself, the buildings look like 2010 with lots of glass and stuff. Well air conditioned, which is really nice when you get so many people together at these things it can get real steambathy. Yeah, I know, what about the computers? The center of the show seemed to me to be the Mega and the laser printer. There was never a time from opening to closing, when there wasn't someone standing there bugging Mark Jansen to make them a copy of something. I got a printout of a form I had done with EZ Draw and a picture included on the Athena CAD program disk, and both looked like offset printing. The major difference I saw in this laser printer and other laser printer output I've seen is that large black areas showed no fade out over the area. This is because the engine in this 'expects' the whole sheet to be black, and drops off the toner in the areas scanned by the laser, so it

makes good dark blacks. Background noise is relatively high at a show, but I couldn't hear a sound from the laser printer machine. From what I heard, maintenance should be reasonable from the point of view of toner and paper, averaging around 3-5 cents a sheet depending on what kind of paper and where you buy the toner and paper.

The Megas were there (only two, I was told they got 30 from this shipment the rest going all over the world.) These were production megas, so they ARE a real product. I saw them unboxed, from regular Atari cartons. The keyboard definitely is nicer, not sure exactly what it is about it but I can type much faster and more surely on it, and it FEELS better. The look is what you've seen in pictures. The fan in the CPU box is quite quiet, I had to put my head close to the machine to hear it, tho' you might be able to hear it in a quiet home environment, I doubt it would be at all annoying. The blitter and the new OS chips were evident. The desktop has an option to run with or without the blitter being used, and the directory window slider bars now do a continuous scroll when you hold the button down on the arrow at the end of the bar. Wasn't able to check out bug fixes, but I understand a lot of them are there. The laser printer isn't in production yet, but I get the definite feeling that everything possible is being done to get them out soon. (like heads may roll if they don't appear soon was the impression)

I was demoing the BBS on a clone of the system and shuttling between that and demoing a Beta version of Drafix1 on the ST. Leonard Tramiel came by and played with that for a while and said that "we've spent a lot of time with these folks, we sure hope they get this out soon". An unnamed party

stopped and told me he ha? been talking t GPSI/FORESIGHT and they h assured him of a two week release date, hope that's right. I picked up the Athena CAD program at the end of the show. It looks really good to me. (uses GDOS output so it works NOW with the Epson FX-100 I have and the Atari Laser printer). The first impression of Athena, especially on a color monitor, is that of a popular drawing program, ala Degas and Neo. You soon see that it has most of the advanced features of Drafix, Auto-dimensioning, rounding of corners to a radius, spline curve fitting to a series of points, and text rotation to any angle, to name a few. I really feel that, so far, these are the only two programs that will satisfy a professional drafter. The others such as EZdraw, MCAD, First CAD, etc. all have uses for many people but don't have the sophistication for tech/engineering drawings. So far, I haven't found anything in the doc, or the program to suggest that you can use different fonts in Athena you can in Drafix, but sin they are using GDOS they should be able to implement this, if it isn't there now. More later as I get more experienced with this one. My first impressions are that Drafix will appeal more to the technical, C A D experienced people, and Athena to people who are new to CAD, due to the different LOOK of the two as you use them, in spite of really comparable ease of use and similarity of features. Athena looks easier to use on a color monitor as some of the text in menus and choice boxes on Drafix are hard to read in color.

The word I got at the show was that Atari had tried several inducements to get Avant Guard to the show with PC Ditto, and that AG had staunchly refused due to the fact that they couldn't spare

anyone from the effort of shipping the product this week. I know I'm not the only one who hopes this is good stuff.

There were several people there selling ram upgrades to the ST up to 4 megs, and I saw two printer image scanners, lots of digital and video digitizers and other stuff. The only place I saw a graphics tablet was at John Demar's QMI booth. After watching, and using it, I'm quite impressed with this. Resolution is quite high I think .001 inch (John correct me if I'm misquoting this), at least its good enough so that when you write your name on the tablet the image on the screen looks like your own handwriting, rather than the output of a drunk, palsied monkey, the way it does when you try to use a mouse the same way. I saw one person tracing an image on a credit card, so it allows tracing off of something at least that thick. Its not magnetic so you don't have to worry about erasing disks near it. John quoted around $400 so we won't all be rushing out to replace our mice. It also takes a chunk of desk space, the drawing surface is full 9 by 11 inches. John's software for it allows you to take any area of the tablet and make it full screen so you can trace out small objects. Large scale on the screen, Super device for serious artist or CAD people. Computer thinks it's a mouse, so it should be easy to program for, and we speculated but didn't try it as input for midimaze, how about being able to teleport in a game by picking up the stylus and moving it over and then putting it down.......... The Xanth people said they are working on a modem version of midimaze that could be played ala Flight simulator on the phone. I quickly volunteered to beta test that, anyone else think they could spare the time? Swamp sysop Xanth

here on GEnie with offers and when they see (I hope) tremendous interest, maybe they will be spurred on.

I know I've missed a lot of things, but this is already the longest message I've left here so I'll quit for now. I know others will cover some of the stuff I forgot or didn't see.

---------- Category 11, Topic 17 Message 53
Sun Jun 21, 1987 S.FRYE
                    at 20:45 PDT

The two new software packages that impressed me the most at the World of Atari show were the Athena II CAD program and the Art Director/Film Director combination from Broderbund. The Director "twins" look like they give you all the features (and more) of Deluxe Paint II for the Amiga and Aegis Animator combined, for $79.95 retail. They say it will be available late September, and judging by the completeness of the package that should be accurate. Athena II is a very powerful 2-D CAD program, probably on a par with the full-house version of Auto-CAD on the IBM-PC and Drafix I. It is also very easy to use. I was able to set up an accuracy test that I saw demonstrated on Drafix I at the West Coast Computer Faire in about three minutes. The test is this: draw three different-size circles on the screen, draw all six possible lines tangent to two of the three circles, and extend the lines to their intersection points. The three intersections SHOULD all lie on a straight line. With Athena II, they did. Only at a Zoom magnification greater than 8 x 10E13 (80,000,000,000,000x magnification!) could you see a separation between the intersection point and the common line. I suspect that was a result of reaching the precision limits of the hardware rather than inaccurate algorithms in the program! ---------- Category

11, Topic 17 Message 54
Mon Jun 22, 1987 J.CHEN
[Jinfu]   at
00:20 EDT

Did anyone see the expandable Atari PC? Not the one with no slot I saw a picture in Analog about this one, any comments from Atari? Sounds like Atari Corp is doing what they did to the ST (adding Mega to the ST line) in the PC clone line.

By the way, the picture shows the expandable PC like a regular PC Clone except there is an Atari logo, also it's a two drive system

Jinfu ---------- Category 11, Topic 17 Message 55
Mon Jun 22, 1987 STACE [Mark Booth]   at 00:35 EDT

Will try to add what In World of Atari. First, I would really like to thank Atari Corp. and the User Groups for providing this kind of show. This show was special in that Atari provided MOST, if not ALL, of the computers for the vendors/developers to use throughout the show. Even with that, you really got the feeling that Atari was trying to keep a low profile throughout the show...giving the vendors a chance to SHINE! And shine they did. I, unfortunately, did not take any notes from the show. I am sure as the next few days pass I, and others, will remember more and more and post same here. Data Pacific was there selling the Magic Sac (Mac emulator) which is up to revision 4.35 now. Some of the fantastic programs that are now reported to work flawlessly with the Sac include: Microsoft Word 3.0, Excel, and Pagemaker 2.0. It was reported to me that the work on the Magic Sac disk drive adapter HARDWARE is finished! Just a few more things to stamp out in the software and Magic Sac users will be able to read Mac disks directly. Expected delivery of the Magic Sac Drive adapter (Interceptor 1) is 4-6 weeks. No retail

price as yet. The Data Pacific booth was the particular favorite of mine (obviously) as I was able to meet Dave and Joel for the first time.

I had the pleasure of working in the Data Pacific booth for an hour or so and got to see first hand the buying frenzy that was taking place. They sold out on Magic Sacs about 2 hours before the end of the show. Borderbund was also showing the ST version of Karateka. In this humble reporter's opinion it looked VERY impressive. This was one of MY very favorite 8-bit games and look forward to the completion date. I seem to recall September/October being the time frame on this one. Also, they are converting Print Shop to the ST. The ST version will have more features than the 8-bit version such as preview before printing and saving of your creations. Michtron was showing their FANTASTIC ST-Replay. This handy little device plugs into the cartridge port and allows you to digitize sounds for play back through the ST monitor or you can output the sound through the ST-Replay cartridge to a stereo etc. When I walked by, it was playing back a 800K+ sound file through the Amplifier in a Radio/Cassette player. I honestly thought it was the Radio playing and not the ST! I heard that ST-Replay will allow you to save your sound files in a format that will allow you to use them with GFA Basic. I can't wait to see all of the wonderful things you folks will be doing with this! How about a talking Andy in Monopoly? The other new item at the Michtron booth was the arcade game AIRBALL. Airball is a Marble Madness "type" game where you must roll a little bubble of air throughout many rooms avoiding sharp objects and all the while keeping your ball inflated. Very challenging and fun! GREAT graphics and music too. QMI was demoing the DeskCart and

selling them at a very brisk pace. They too were sold out before the end of day two. They also were showing BBS/ST and our own Darlah was using a BETA test copy of ST-Talk Professional to log on and demonstrate GEnie. I had a little bit of a chance to play with ST-Talk Pro. I didn't have enough time to evaluate EVERY feature but from what I did see....It is going to be worth the wait! Move over Flash... here comes the PRO! The IMG Scanner people (don't remember the company name, sorry) were there showing the scanner in operation. They actually had about 5 to sell and quickly sold them in the first couple of hours of the show. The IMG Scanner consists of a circuit board (with no case at this time) that plugs into the ST's cart port and the scanner sensor that mounts to the top of your printers print head. You then roll a picture into your printer and start the whole thing running and 5 minutes or so later you have a digitized picture of your source. The IMG Scanner provides it's own light so the resulting pictures are very evenly lighted. The 5 they did have sold for $99.95. Antic was there demonstrating the Stereotek glasses, CAD 3-D 2.0, and running many of the demos created for each. I managed to get a copy of CyberScape the fantastic Cad 3-D/Cybermate demo. We have received permission to upload CyberScape here in the GEnie RT but it is over 700K long and requires 1 meg to run. How many are interested in D/Ling a file of that size??? Let us know. Supra was selling their excellent 20, 30 and 60 MEG hard drives but the thing that caught MY eye was their VERY fast 250 MEG hard drive (that's right.. two hundred fifty MEG!). For those that require MASS storage you can be the first on your block with a quarter GIGOBYTE of storage. Due to difficulties beyond their control, the streaming tape back-up was not shown as

promised. (Personally, I think the hard drive price are getting so low that makes more sense to use a second hard drive to back up the first!) Migraph was showing Easy Draw 2.0 along with the Supercharger. Supercharger allows true 300 DPI resolution output to a Laser printer. Combined with the excellent scanned picture from the Navarone Scanner (more on this in a minute) the Easy Draw/Supercharger combination looks like a tough one to beat. Navarone was showing their Video and Audio digitizers as well as a new item, the Navarone Scanner. The scanner is made by Canon and Navarone created the interface (cart port) and software to make it work with the ST. Simply feed in a picture, photo etc. and VERY quickly you have a HIGH quality digitized pic file compatible with Degas Elite etc. This device is NOT a toy but a quick HIGH quality professional tool. It will be a welcome addition to the current ST desktop publishing boom. Well, this is getting long...I am sure I missed a lot (there was a lot to see, believe me). I will post more as it comes to me Mark (STACE) --------
Category 11, Topic 17
Message 57 Mon Jun 22, 1987 STACE [Mark Booth] at 01:35 EDT

Oh, one more thing, it was a real joy meeting many of the gang from here on GEnie. Finally being able to connect a face with a name is something I recommend to all! John, Gordon, Dave, Dave, Fred, Joel, Mark, Mark, Greg, Jim, (oops) and one more Mark...it was a lot of fun, let's do it again soon. (This time, YOU pick the restaurant!) :-) ---------

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24 HOURS ON WEEKENDS

LATE BREAKING NEWS...

NEW ATARI ROMS AROUND!

The Editor of the Huntsville Atari Club reported in his July issue that he had received his new ROM chips for the ST, minus the blitter. He gave no other details, but reported speed increases, faster scrolling of slider bars, etc. Jeff is checking with his distributors and may have a report for everyone soon, on the BBS.

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY PAMELA! One year on the 10th of July! I LOVE you!

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